

Request for Expressions of Interest

Preserving Creative America: Digital Content in the Private Sector

A Project of the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program, The Library of Congress

Announcement Number: RFEI-2006-Creative
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Submissions Deadline: September 22, 2006 (see section V, below)
Project Duration: Up to 3 years
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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Library of Congress seeks non-binding expressions of interest for collaborative projects that model innovative solutions for the preservation of commercial digital content. The Library is interested in digital content intended for distribution through commercial channels, specifically moving images (film, television), digital photography and other forms of pictorial art, multimedia and literary arts, recorded sound, and video and computer games. Project participants may include content creators, service providers, distributors, technology firms, associations that represent such entities, and cultural institutions that are entrusted with preserving content.

II. BACKGROUND

In December 2000, Congress authorized the Library of Congress to develop and execute a congressionally approved plan for a National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP). A \$99.8 million congressional appropriation was made to establish the program. The authorizing legislation instructed the Library of Congress to lead a collaborative initiative, with other federal and nonfederal entities, including the private sector, to develop a national strategy for the long term preservation of digital content through the establishment of a national network of libraries and other organizations committed to collecting and preserving digital materials. The goal is to build a sustainable network of committed partners, including private, as well as public institutions, working through a technical architecture with defined roles and responsibilities for the collection and long term preservation of digital content. To date, NDIIPP has more than 65 partners – institutions large and small, other government agencies,

companies in the public and private sectors, educational institutions, research laboratories and other organizations both in the United States and abroad.¹

The Library of Congress envisions the commercial creative content sector playing an important role in the national NDIIPP network. In order to reach out to various industries in this sector, the Library convened an initial strategic planning meeting in Los Angeles in April 2006 to launch the NDIIPP Preserving Creative America project. It was attended by a group of interested companies and associations, mainly from the motion picture, music recording, still photography, graphics and illustration, and interactive game industries. The meeting discussed a range of issues pertaining to the preservation of creative content in digital form and explored potential relationships between the Library of Congress and those engaged in or associated with the creation of digital content in the United States today.

The Los Angeles meeting highlighted important preservation work already under way by the creative content industries, and at the same time identified several areas in which additional work is needed. Examples of the latter include standardizing content formats and metadata, including standards for the deposit of digital content with the Copyright Office; finding economically sustainable models for funding preservation activities; forging mutually beneficial relationships between content creators and public cultural heritage institutions such as libraries, archives, and museums; and refining production workflows.

III. ABOUT POTENTIAL PRESERVING CREATIVE AMERICA PROJECTS

Objectives. The overall goal for the Preserving Creative America project is to support efforts that encourage the preservation of a wide range of creative works--America's future cultural heritage--by the creators themselves and/or with the collaborative assistance of cultural heritage institutions.

Proposed projects should address one or more of the objectives listed below.

- Refine or develop standards for content formats and/or metadata that contribute to long-term preservability of content.
 - These standards may be specific to a particular industry (e.g., recorded music or television) but they must be non-proprietary, openly described, and available for use by others.
 - Proposals to refine or develop format or metadata standards that apply to content in the production process, e.g., mastering materials, should indicate how the use of these standards will affect the archivability of final products and thereby benefit cultural heritage institutions and others that receive and take stewardship of such content.

¹ The complete text of the "Plan for the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program" is available at www.digitalpreservation.gov. This includes an explanation of how the plan was developed, whom the Library worked with to develop the plan and the key components of the digital preservation infrastructure. The plan was approved by Congress in December 2002.

- Develop a refined production workflow that enhances the long-term preservation of the content being produced.
 - The workflow may be appropriate for a particular industry but must be non-proprietary, openly described, and available for use by others.
 - Projects pertaining to workflow development may incorporate a practical demonstration, involve tool development or tool evaluation, or draft guidelines appropriate for an industry or creative community.

- Develop or contribute to the development of organizational and/or technical infrastructure for the long-term preservation of content.
 - Public-private partnerships or service models for shared preservation responsibilities are of special interest to the Library. These may include cooperative arrangements or agreements between content creators and/or owners and cultural heritage institutions.
 - If the project involves the preservation of content by its owner, the project should explore "fail-safe" arrangements that safeguard society's long-term interest in the preservation and ultimate availability of that content over time.
 - The Library has an interest in distributed technology models. Proposals that include data storage and/or data distribution using shared or replicated methods are encouraged. The Library understands that these may not be appropriate in all sectors of private industry.
 - The Library encourages the development of tools to support tasks associated with long-term preservation, including software modules or plug-ins for widely-used applications. Such tools must be non-proprietary, openly described, and available for use by others.

- Refine or develop economically sustainable preservation models.
 - Construct a demonstration model within a single organization.
 - Model a public/private arrangement with shared preservation responsibility.
 - Explore new products or services that may be based on new business models and that will serve multiple entities seeking to preserve their content.

- Educate the industry and/or the general public about preservation of digital content.

- Model the deposit of digital content for copyright and assist the Library in determining the appropriate preferred formats and metadata for the deposit of digital content with the Library.

- Contribute to the building of cultural heritage collections.
 - Arrangements in which commercial entities preserve content in anticipation of future transfer to the Library of Congress or another cultural heritage institution.
 - Arrangements in which cultural heritage institutions sustain additional (redundant) copies of commercial content in support of its long-term preservation.

- This program will *not* support the digitization of analog materials (including paper, microfilm, sound recordings, or motion pictures).

Participant guidelines. Because the long-term preservation of digital content is highly dependent on actions taken prior to the public distribution of that content and because content owners have a significant stake in ensuring the continued viability of the content, the Library seeks projects that show significant involvement by content creators, service providers, distributors, technology firms, or associations. Participation from the fields of moving images (film, television), digital photography and other forms of pictorial art, multimedia and literary arts, recorded sound, or video or computer games is of particular interest. Consortial projects are encouraged. While this *Request for Expressions of Interest* is directed to those who create or distribute commercial content, the associations that represent them, and related entities, projects involving the participation of cultural heritage institutions are welcome.

Projects should yield concrete results within a three-year period. Preserving Creative America participants should expect to take part in NDIIPP-wide meetings and conferences and to share information and project outcomes with other NDIIPP partners.

Funding support and cost sharing. In the NDIIPP legislation, Congress specified that most NDIIPP funding must be contingent upon the receipt of matching cash or in-kind contributions from non-federal sources. Therefore, project proposals that request NDIIPP funding support must include the provision of an equal or greater match in funding support from project participants. Cost sharing in the form of in-kind contributions may include such cost elements as contributed time spent by staff or consultants on the project, the donation of technology and services, or the absorption of a portion of indirect cost rates usually chargeable to the project.

Library of Congress role. Depending on the proposed project, the Library's role in each project may include convening meetings, engaging additional external expert consultants, or providing Library staff to participate in project activities. The Library's role will be formalized by agreement upon project acceptance.

IV. WHAT TO SUBMIT

Please send a response of two to five pages that includes the following information:

- Name of the organization or entity to lead the project, and contact information for the person submitting the information.
- Brief description of how the potential project will address the objectives outlined above.
- Names of potential partner institutions or entities (specific commitments need not have been concluded). Indicate the roles they will play and, if appropriate, describe their key participants.
- Describe any role to be played by the Library.
- If an outcome of the project includes the placement of copies of the content in the Library or other public sector archive, provide a brief description of that content.
- Project duration including anticipated start and end dates.

- Project budget estimate and relative share of project costs among project participants to include the Library of Congress, if applicable.

Please send responses to pca@loc.gov and include “RFEI-2006-Creative” in the message subject heading. Questions may be directed to the program contact: Abigail Potter, Office of Strategic Initiatives, Library of Congress, abpo@loc.gov.

V. PROJECT SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AGREEMENTS

The Library plans to review project submissions from late September through November 2006. Initial proposals may be refined through discussions between Library staff and the lead organization. Selected projects will be formalized by means of a suitable agreement between the Library and the lead organization.